

Nuggets of News



P.O. Box 26
Gold Hill, Ore. 97525
504 First Avenue

MARCH, 1995



GOLD HILL CENTENNIAL

On February 12, 1895, the city of Gold Hill was incorporated. In honor of this event, your historical society is participating in several ways of celebrating this momentous occasion. Shown above is a picture of the Gold Hill Centennial medallion currently on sale at the museum. The medallion was specially designed by Steven R. Lundberg and minted by Northwest Territorial Mint in Auburn, Washington to the following specifications:

Assay: .999 Fine Silver
Weight: 1 Troy Ounce
Size: 39 mm Diameter
Thickness: 2.9 mm.
Strike: Proof

These medallions sell for \$25.00 each plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. They are going fast so if you'd like one please get in

touch with us soon.

Clare Moore and Sharon Olson put in many hours researching and putting together a centennial display in the small front display room. If you haven't seen it yet, be sure to come in and see what a great job they did. Thank you, ladies.

We're working with Jackson County Librarian, Jeannette Blankenship, to involve the schools in an essay contest, with winning entries to be bound and on display in the museum and the library. More news on this later as plans firm up.

We've also made Gold Hill Centennial badges which will be sold for \$1.00 each at the museum.

DOLL RAFFLE

Our beautiful porcelain doll was won by Barbara Stolhand of Brentwood, California. We hope she will enjoy her. Congratulations, Barbara.

ELECTION

Election of officers was accomplished at the February meeting with the following results:

- President	Marge Martin 855-1559
- Vice President	Alyce Bottelson 855-1889
- Secretary	Ted Wharton 773-4525
- Treasurer	Donna Saddler 826-1756

Let's give our new and old officers and our Board of Directors a vote of thanks for being willing to give of their time. Thanks are also due to our volunteers who ably staff the museum and all other members who come to our assistance whenever we need help with a project. We can't survive without any of you!

EARLY MEMORIES IN GOLD HILL

by Charles Benjamin Wharton
December, 1993

C C B W 1993 (text & sketches)

Continued from June, 1994, September, 1994, & December 1994 Nuggets of News

CHAPTER 7. TREEHOUSES AND SMOKE

Even the word "treehouse" evokes a magic image for kids. Unfortunately, not many trees grow with the limbs in the right places to support a structure, and when a perfect one is found it probably is in an inconvenient location.

We had already made one treehouse in the scrub oaks down below the house, but it was pretty rudimentary and flimsy, and right beside the road, with no privacy at all. It had a bad reputation, because Ted had driven a nail into his knee while fastening a board, and I had gotten a bloodied eyebrow from a pinecone thrown by Don Dungey during a raid. The scar still shows.

We needed a better treehouse, and there was a ready supply of boards and a can of used nails, left over from the reconstruction of our house. The best materials had been taken for the rabbit house conversion, but there was still plenty of good stuff there. Now all we needed was the tree.

Buddy Blair, Billy West and I looked at the thicket of small laurels (the local vernacular for madrone trees) up the hill from the chicken house, with trunks about ankle diameter, and began to occupy it for a fort. But the nails split the trunks and everything was so wobbly that we abandoned the site.

Ted decided to build a cabin, and without too clear a plan in mind, we pitched in. He started from the bottom in logical order (with a treehouse you can start at the top), digging the foundation and steps in the red clay hardpan. The site was private in a grove of small ponderosas, not far above a spring, needed to mix the mud for the fireplace. It was just in view from our upstairs bedroom window if you stooped low to look under the eaves up the hill.

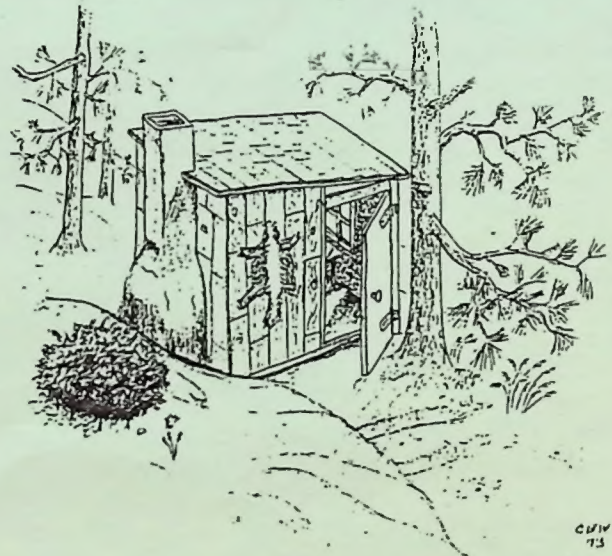
We fussed over the fireplace, and plastered, and tore it down, added a broken piece of chimney tile, plastered some more, then decided to try it out. It smoked badly. Dad said it needed a taller chimney, and gave us a whole new terra cotta tile. Now it drew well, and we made roaring fires to harden the clay, even when

it was 90° in the shade. Cracks appeared in several places, so we plastered some more. Then we had the good fortune to find a broken bag of cement down by the railroad tracks, and lugged what was left of the 97 pounds of it home on our coaster Bug. Cement mixed with the clay made a perfect plaster, and no further cracks appeared.

Ted had studied Indian cultures in school and decided to make some clay dishes with our newly-invented mixture, and bake them in the fireplace. I settled on clay marbles. None of the wares got really hard, but we did have some unique marbles to play with for a long time. We got a little mad when kids broke them with their steelies.

Dad showed us how to melt down old zinc Mason jar lids in a cast iron pipe and crucible. We had no idea what to do with the zinc ingots, but the process made pretty colors in the flame, and we used up all the old lids we could find in refuse piles. Lead from old batteries melted also, once the acid was sputtered off. We had to leave the door open when we melted batteries, to let out the choking fumes. We even made an alloy of the two metals and tried the slugs out for slingshot ammo, resulting in squirrel stew.

The walls rose slowly, as we learned how to make corners and install the window, which was also a left-over from the house reconstruction supply. The door ended up close to a pine tree, so it wouldn't open very far, and it was so narrow and low that only kids could get in. We found later that the location for the door was really a poor choice, as water poured in during a rain storm. The dirt Floor stayed too muddy to sit on for a week. So we dug trenches around the whole cabin to avoid future flooding.



I can't remember what the roof was like, but the cabin did have a rainproof covering. I remember that we had to lift the table in from the top, over the walls, before the roof was installed. Bill Dungey had found a rickety maple stand in their basement, and we sawed off the legs a little. That didn't leave much room inside, and when there was a gang of kids visiting, we had to take turns going in. But mostly Ted liked to go there alone to enjoy the fireplace at night. Once Aunt Lily Dusenberry brought some marshmallows, and knelt down to poke her head in the door while we toasted them. The window was nailed in, and didn't open.

Aunt Lily held a special place in our family; she was staying with us when cousin Ida Pearl was born. When her time came, Ted and I were sent out to play. Aunt Evagene was sent after Doc Chisholm, and Mother attended to the labor, which apparently went very fast. Mother had completed the delivery and wrapped the baby up by the time Auntie arrived with the doctor to tie off the cord. All my 3-year-old memory recalls is that people confined to bed have to use a bed pan to go to the toilet. I got to know the baby later, and Ida and I have been good friends ever since.

The walls of the cabin were papered with Sunday funny papers, stuck on at odd angles with flour paste. We upgraded the reading selection from time to time by adding another layer. The cracks between the wall boards shifted constantly, tearing the paper, and occasionally obliterating a critical frame in a cartoon strip.

About the time the cabin was finished, in the middle of August, we finally found the perfect tree for the treehouse. It was a large white oak, with two companions, standing on the east-facing slope about 100 yards above the spring in Duel Gulch. In years past some catastrophe had damped off the main trunk and three surrounding limbs had grown up like an inverted crown, leaving a perfect basin for a platform, eight feet above the ground. Unfortunately a den of biting ants now inhabited this choice spot. We knew them as piss ants, because of the foul odor they emitted when one poked at their den.

We decided the ants had to go, and began a program of extermination. Dousing them with water was pointless, since they had already protected themselves against rain. Even battery acid drained off. We plugged their holes and cracks with mud, but by the next morning the tree was

swarming with ants again. So we decided to burn them out with gasoline. We chopped the crack open and chipped away most of the dead wood to expose parts of the den of writhing, stinking ants. We only had about a pint of gas that we had been able to drain out of the old, abandoned Monitor car parked at the foot of the gulch, so we gathered dry grass and poked it into the cracks like a wick.

About that time the Atherton and Kellogg kids arrived to see what all the commotion was. So now we had eight kids gathered around when Ted lit off the firebomb. It burned brightly for a few minutes, then died down to a puff of smoke, then was still. Not an ant was in sight. Ted took off his shirt and climbed up into the crotch to verify the victory, getting thoroughly black as a reward. So we decided to begin bringing boards up, and Ted decided to take a bath to get off the soot.

Fifteen minutes later, with Ted still in the tub, our gang puffed and sweated back to the tree with some splintery 2 X 4's. The other gang was up in the tree sticking dry grass into the crack again. They said some ants had returned and they were going to burn them out. We objected, but these were 13 and 14 year-olds, so we didn't argue too much. They got quite a blaze going, and it drove them up into the higher branches, on the downhill side of the tree. They were now at least 30 feet off the ground, and had no thought of jumping. So as the flames began licking at their feet, they poked the burning grass out of the crotch. We stomped on it and put out the flames. But the second batch fell into a clump of tinder-dry brush, and fight it as we could with dirt and sticks, we couldn't keep it from spreading. The mountain was now on fire. We yelled and ran around, everyone accusing someone else of causing it. When we realized there was nothing we could do, Bill and I ran for town to get help. The other gang took off for home, and we didn't see them again for a month.

By the time we got to the fire station the chief had already seen the smoke, and was collecting equipment. We just reported the fire, without saying how it started, and he didn't ask, so we slipped away, back to the house to tell Ted. He already had seen it, and was up the hill with a shovel and wet gunny sack to swat at the flames. But there isn't much you can do with a brush fire on a steep hillside except keep out of the way. The fire crew cleared a wide strip to protect a grove of pines, but they let the rest go. The beacon wasn't in danger, so

long as the fire stopped at the tip of the ridge, which it did.

The cabin was spared, and no houses were even in danger, but Ted's shirt got burned up, and our favorite cluster of wild tiger lilies (known by us as red lilies) was destroyed. We convinced ourselves that no animals got killed.

The smoke was visible over the whole valley, and pear pickers at del Rio Orchard six miles away speculated on what might be burning. Mother and Aunt Evagene agreed that it was in the right direction to be either the school house or Snyder's Gulch, but there was too much smoke to be just a house fire. They had no idea that it was our gulch. There was no telephone, and no transportation until six o'clock, so they had to just hope and pray for the best. They reasoned that if it was really bad someone would come for them. No one did, and by the time they got home the fire was mostly history.

CHAPTER 8. TO THE CITY

After the fire, the mountain was ugly and black, and I wanted to get away for a while to get the horrible scene of the spreading flames out of my mind. So I was sent by train to Medford, 12 miles away, to stay with Dad until school started. He had just moved his restaurant, the Green Lantern Cafe, to a new location on Main Street, to make room for the construction of Fleurers Bakery, and I got to sleep on a cot in the back of the kitchen. The room he was renting on Orange Street had only one bed. My job was to stand in the front window in a white uniform with a tall chef's hat, and turn the chicken roasting on a rotating spit to make sure it didn't burn. When it was done, I was free to explore the town. Sometimes I ran errands to the butcher store or the IGA market, because Dad's wooden leg was giving him some problems, and he didn't like to walk long distances. Occasionally I carried meals upstairs to ladies living in the Oregon Rooms, and Peggy always gave me a hug and a 15 cent tip. Dad never told me what kind of work they did, but I always presumed they did tailoring or suit alterations, because of all the men who tromped up and down the stairs.

It was pretty exciting, living in the city, with paved sidewalks and whole blocks of store fronts filled with fancy things. There was a big billboard advertising the COPCO electric and gas company on the end of the Green Lantern building, with lattice work on each side that made perfect ladders

to climb up for a view over the roof tops. There was even a walkway behind the sign, 30 feet off the ground, kind of like a city version of a tree house. I didn't think being up there was scary, but dodging the heavy car traffic in crosswalks sometimes was.

I was a little disappointed to have to leave the city so soon to return to Gold Hill for school. Dad said things were going better, and it looked as if we could all move to Medford after a while, and get the family back together again. But we were still in the middle of the Depression, so who knew when that would be?

It turned out that we did move there in 1934-35, but without Ted, who stayed in Gold Hill to finish his Freshman high school year, because Medford High School had only three years, and he sure didn't want to go back to Junior High. He lived with Mark Campbell's family up Sardine Creek, and then stayed on during the summer to camp and pick hops in Grants Pass with Aunt Lily's family and the Campbells.

We made several trips by bus and train carrying things to Medford, and on the last trip we put the cat in a market basket, sewed a gunny sack over the top and carried him, wide-eyed and meowing occasionally, on the Greyhound bus. The driver winked, and told me that if the cat got out and clawed someone, they might sue us. That was the first time I ever heard about being sued, and wasn't quite sure what it was, but it didn't sound very pleasant. The cat didn't escape, so I never found out.

Finally, in September we were all together again, for the first time in four years, and it was none too soon, because we noticed a waitress named Marie making eyes at Dad. Mother thought it would be a good idea if Marie left, so she went back to South Dakota. We rented the Orange Street house where Dad had had a room, and then sublet rooms to two old-maid ladies, Edith Giffin and Lorena Selfridge. We rented out the Gold Hill house for several years before selling it, reluctant to sever the connection in case the situation might arise that we could come back. We returned a couple of times to fix broken windows and torn screens, and to cut down the old black walnut tree that was dead but didn't know it. Dad was able to salvage some sections to use in making furniture, and he made me a marble box from a piece of a limb. He went into the cabinet-making business later, after the restaurant went bankrupt due to lack of customers. Times were hard.

We never built the second treehouse, and as far as I know, or care, the piss ants still own the tree.



Orange Street House

© CRW 1993

THE END

MODERN TECHNOLOGY

We are at last coming of age and beginning to get some of our records on OUR OWN computer. The computer was purchased in January and our expert, Donna Saddler, has been busy installing personalized software, inputting data on our artifacts, getting the financial reports in it and she also made all of the signs for the Centennial display. Membership data is also being input and should be a great help keeping the roster current, mailing labels up to date and many of the other things we need to keep our society and museum operating.

LETTERS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Dear Friends,

I have been a member of the Gold Hill Historical Society since May 1994 and have enjoyed the Newsletter that has been mailed to my home.

I have been working feverishly on my family history and have run into a few stumbling blocks so hopefully some of you can help me find my way.

My grandmother May Martha Smith married William Alexander Morris. If there are any descendants of either of these families that would like to correspond with me I would appreciate it. I have copies of Marriage licenses, death certificates and some pictures that I would be willing to share.

May Martha Smith was the daughter of a preacher who settled in Talent, OR approximately 1900. I understand that the rake ran off with a woman of his

congregation around 1910 leaving his wife to raise their 8 children. William Alexander Morris was the son of William Marion Morris and Sarah Elizabeth Cook. He was born in Footh Creek. His father and mother came with the wagon train of 1876 along with his grandfather (Archibald Morris) and grandmother (Polly Whittenberg).

Sincerely,

Martha Joseph

1212 Tapadera Dr.

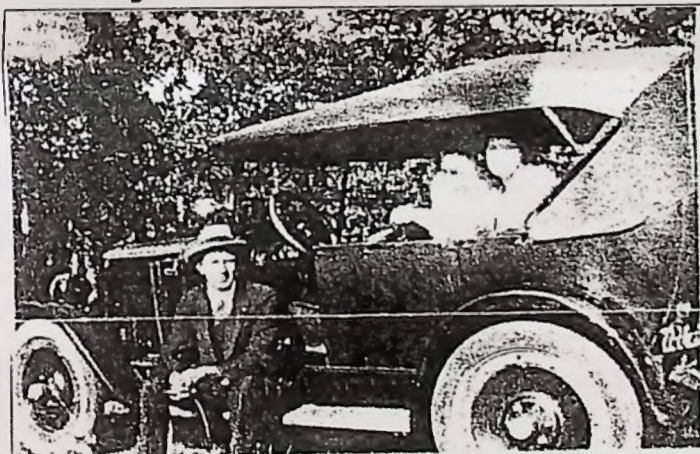
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

Can any of our members help Martha? To date our research at the museum has been fruitless. I'm sure she'd appreciate any information.

And from Mark Campbell.....

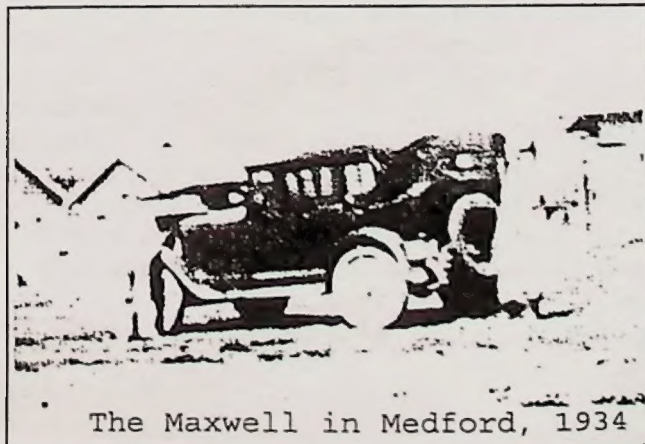
Dear Ted,

I thank you and the girls thank you for the fine calendars! We think you did a great job in assembling and arranging the photos of the old cars and other modes of transportation. I wish I had known what you were after; I have several snapshots of the 1922 Maxwell, and I think I have one somewhere of the 1924 Oakland. I used my computer and scanner to reproduce the following



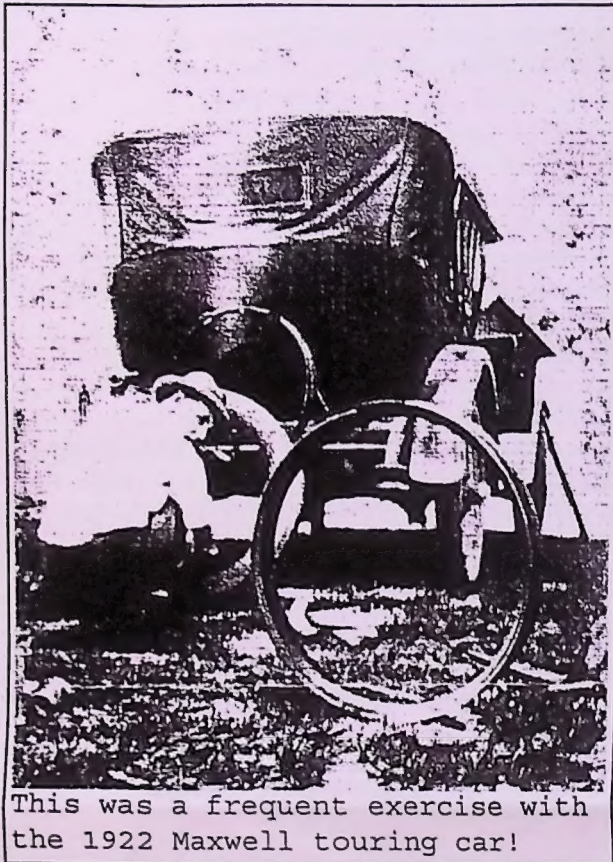
The Campbell family and their 1922 Maxwell touring car (about 1925)

After we moved to Gold Hill in 1934, we went to Medford one time to visit a lot we owned, and took this snap of the car in the middle of the lot.



The Maxwell in Medford, 1934

This was taken at my aunt's farm in Hood River in May of 1928. On the back my mother wrote, "An old sweetheart of mine!" referring both to the car and to my dad!



This was a frequent exercise with the 1922 Maxwell touring car!

This model of Maxwell had an underdesigned rear axle, and we broke one a couple of times on the corduroy roads of the back country. Note the split rim design of the disk wheels.

Mark Campbell



And still another request from....

Mark and Ruth Eckroth

2108 Forest Trail

Rio Ranch, NM 87124

This is the niece of Joe Kovalski & Doris. She would like to have any information if anyone knows of them. Joe worked for the railroad in the 50's. He built his home here but not in town. He died here, maybe late 70's or early 80's. They also noted that sometimes the name is spelled with an "A" (Kavaleski).



GOLD DUST DAY

Gold Dust Day will be celebrated on Saturday, June 10th. It should be quite a jubilee to commemorate the centennial of the incorporation of the city. We hope that everyone will come out to help all of us celebrate. Ted Wharton is already hard at work on our float for the parade, and the Nugget Club is working on all of the coordination and planning for the day.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Members---

We have accomplished a lot in the past year, 1994. Now we are facing a new year. We will be doing a lot of landscaping like putting up a new fence, installing underground sprinklers, planting a lawn and putting in a rose garden. Other projects will include a parking lot, disabled access, inside stairway to the basement, and the continuation of photographing and cataloging artifacts.

We are so fortunate to have our beautiful museum and our wonderful volunteers who make it all possible. My thanks to all of you who give so freely of your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Marge



THE GOLD HILL CENTENNIAL MEDALLION CELEBRATING GOLD HILL'S 100 YEARS

The word "GOLD" strikes fire in the hearts of men and helped create the settlement of the west. In 1853 gold was discovered in Southern Oregon, developed into a stampede by the 1860's and was a frantic enterprise for 20 years. In 1884 Thomas Chavener donated land for the town, aptly named GOLD HILL, which was then incorporated in 1895. To celebrate this momentous occasion, a .999 pure silver Centennial Medallion was struck. Facsimile shown here and is available for sale thru the Gold Hill Historical Society. See order form below. The coin contains 3 pure gold nuggets from this area, 2 on the face and 1 in the gold pan on the reverse side. An initial lot of 1000 coins are being run.

SEND ORDER TO:

GOLD HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

504 1st Ave. PO Box 26

Gold Hill, OR 97525

Please send me ☐ Silver
GOLD HILL CENTENNIAL MEDALLIONS
@ \$25.00 each, no minimum order
Add \$5.00 shipping & insurance.
This offer expires Dec. 31, 1995
Please make Funds payable to
"GOLD HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY"
Allow 3 weeks for processing.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

Total encl. _____

☐ Check ☐ Money order

To save shipping & insurance, you may
purchase the medallion at the museum.

Sorry, we cannot process credit cards.



MUSEUM HOURS

10:00 AM till 4:00 PM on the following days:

Winter

(Thanksgiving through Memorial Day)

Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Summer

(Memorial Day through Labor Day)

Wednesday through Sunday

Fall

(Labor Day through Thanksgiving)

Thursday through Sunday



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

- St. Patrick's Day March 17th
- Remember to turn your clocks ahead April 2nd
- Easter April 16th
- Mother's Day May 14th
- Memorial Day May 29th
- GOLD DUST DAY June 10th
- Flag Day June 14th
- Father's Day June 18th

MEETINGS

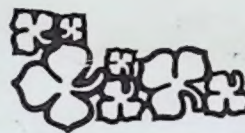
Regular meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the museum, located at 504 First Avenue. Please join us for an evening of fellowship, some say-so in how your society is run, and some great refreshments. Next meetings are:

Wednesday, March 15, 1995 at 7:00 PM

Wednesday, April 19, 1995 at 7:00 PM

Wednesday, May 17, 1995 at 7:00 PM

Wednesday, June 21, 1995 at 7:00 PM



Gold Hill Historical Society

P. O. Box 26

504 First Avenue

Gold Hill, Oregon 97525

